

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace paragraph [0005] on page 1 with the following replacement paragraph.

[0005] During an IC chip dicing operation, cracks formed ~~form that~~ can propagate into the active area of the IC chip, causing failures ~~fails~~. In the prior art, crack stop layers have been incorporated into the perimeter of the IC chip to prevent cracks formed during chip dicing from propagating into the chip. The cracks generally propagate through the BEOL (back end of line) dielectrics which are generally brittle materials such as silicon dioxide SiO₂.